

Blackbird-Millington Conservation Corridor March Community Workshops Results

COMMENTS

March 9th, Blackbird Community Center (19 of 47)

March 10th, Blackbird State Forest (2 of 7)

March 10th, Millington Elementary School (14 of 22)

How did you hear about the workshop?

Newspaper - 14 Mailing - 12 Judy/phone - 6 Word of Mouth - 6
Other -2 (Delaware Native Plant Society, email)

Was the location and time convenient for you?

Yes - 34 No - 0

Was the workshop informative?

Yes - 32 Somewhat - 5 Very - 2

"It was interesting to hear varying points of view"

"Please more meetings, too!"

"Would like more info - why was this area focus of attention -- what data has already been collected -- need clearer map of corridor 'boundary' "

Which part of the workshop did you find particularly helpful or particularly not helpful?

Liked:

Group work/discussions (4)

All (4)

Maps (2)

Hearing others' concerns/values (diversity & commonality) (4)

Explanation of conservation targets (2)

Information on TNC and the project - 3

Other/comments: "Finding out plans and what effect it has on public, people, and places," "Gave idea of what general feeling as to Ag and landowner rights", "It was all helpful"

Didn't Like:

Did not answer all questions 4 ("what are your goals", "what do you expect of landowners", "what do you expect of the public/taxes," how are you "going to keep land open, and "what are "your true plans?") "Not much, because of my hearing problem."

"Wish a little less time was spent on lists and more on specifics of the area involved - animals, photos of areas."

"I found out more about your organization, but would still like to know more about what your group is doing with the land and water."

"Need more specific data on land areas; land uses area; printouts, handouts; e.g. % wooded, private ownership, acreage by land use type --"

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Do you plan to attend future workshops?

Yes - 22 No - 1

Don't Know/Maybe/Possibly - 10

Do you have any suggestions for future workshops?

- More visual
- Habitat preservation esp. wetlands/hunting areas
- Watershed preservation exp concerning the proposed wells/deep water & the effect on current private wells
- Tell us what your plans are. What have you done for similar corridors?
- Considering the interest in nature expressed why not programs on the natural history of the corridor?
- What kind of advice, information, etc. can you offer with respect to making farmland, woodland more generally useful for the total environment
- More answers (2)
- Please keep us updated with other workshops. Input from everyone is important.
- To come out and tell us what your plans are about.
- Point out the good facts about the area. List of species important.
- Start at 7 p.m. - no more than 2 hours - goal of 1.5 hours
- I would like to receive updates - Claire Jewell
- Please send out single sheet flyers (like DelDOT's) mass mailings to Postal Customer, Townsend, DE and other nearby areas (to reach a lot of people) if you can afford it. I know mass mailings can be costly.
- No, it seemed to go well
- More data on acreage, private v state forest, amount of land needed for forest connectivity, percent agriculture, industry, developed - DATA!
- Maryland people at next meeting
- Attempt to get Maryland representation personal
- Your group are doing very well
- Bring poster sized maps - give people stickers to indicate areas they care most about.
- More visuals, more group work
- Show slides of wildlife & plants in the area?
- show natural area uses (canoeing, etc.)
- Don't be so isolated on the side of the room
- Noted at end: Need handout with information about the corridor

*Please use the **back of this page** to write down any questions or concerns you have about this workshop or the Blackbird-Millington Conservation Corridor planning effort, including questions or concerns that were not addressed here tonight.*

- What you have in mind requires an all-encompassing team effort. Too many "green" efforts are one-sided, usually high-handed.

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- Where are we to get the money to make this possible, Buffers are you going to pay for lost of farm land tillable
- List ways people can help keep this wild. specifics.
- Please be aware that the MD DNR is doing a watershed restoration action strategy for the upper Chester this year and next - it would be good to coordinate this planning.

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NOTES

Who attended:

<i>March 9th</i>	<i>March 10 afternoon</i>	<i>March 10 evening</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52 Counted by VFW (including 5 TNC) • Majority were residents, most of which have lived in the area for more than 5 years. • At least half a dozen have lived in area for more than 20 years; several for their whole lives. • Overwhelming majority work outside of the corridor - in Newark, Dover, Wilmington, Philadelphia. • Most who work in the corridor are in farming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All but 1 were residents (one not lives in Middletown) • Most residents for 10 years or more • Most moved to area for open space and rural character • One born in area • One moved to area for affordable housing/economics • Most retired; one works in Dover, one at home, one travels to Middletown a lot for activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most were residents and worked in corridor (farmers, logger) • One worked in Newark • Most had been in corridor for a long time - one for his whole life

Why they attended:

<i>March 9th</i>	<i>March 10 afternoon</i>	<i>March 10 evening</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because they want to grow up (or want their children to grow up) and be able to have land and open space • Want to protect the right to farm and property rights • Want to keep rural character • Want to keep access to land for hunting/fishing • Want to keep access to land for riding horses • Interest in natural resource areas • Protection of water • To find out what TNC's goal is • Because they don't want/need to be told what to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to know what's going on in the area • Want to know what's going on with TNC • Concern for loss of species/wildlife • Want to learn about the corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about effects on land values • concerned about restrictions on farms • To find out what kinds of plants and animals are important to TNC to preserve • To find out if TNC is mainly interested in wetland areas • To find out if TNC has any money to buy properties in this area. • Interested in what happens to Blackbird State Forest land • Interested in what we can do to keep this part of the Chester River system in its current "best" state • To find out if TNC turns land over to other agencies.

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What they like/value most about their house/yard/farms

<i>March 9th</i>	<i>March 10 afternoon</i>	<i>March 10 evening</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to history (old farms, way of life) • Having open/natural areas right outside our door • Hearing the sounds of nature (insects, ambhibians, "listening to quail with my coffee", "night sounds in summer") • No shopping centers next door • Nearest neighbors a mile away (or "no neighbors") • Quiet • Privacy • Farms next door • Safety • No light pollution (stargazing, meteor showers, shadows in moonlight) • Hunting near home • Deer/wildlife • Walk the dogs without leashes • See both ends of the rainbow • Hawks, harriers soaring, bald eagles • Living close to nature • No ramps off Route 1 to promote development • Walk out the back door and not be in someone's yard • Riding an ATV • House is on farm and away from the road • History - home deeded 1686, with markers • Low traffic • Natural setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open space • privacy • wildlife • public access (especially for launch of kayak) • lack of traffic - ability to recreate on roads • big old trees • gardening • birds • lack of neighbors • deer • butterflies • sunsets • loss of context - generational • meadow • recreational opportunities • quality of life / lack of stress / peaceful feeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing for future generations • wide open spaces / land • Don't see neighbors • Low density • watching kids grow up playing outside • no/less traffic • people in area are open and friendly • clean water - groundwater quality • dew on the grass in the morning • boating, fishing, paddling closeby • quiet • knowing the neighbors • birds singing • wildlife • demarva bays & their diversity • clean fresh air • freedom of management/stewardship • connection with heritage/history • water nearby • forest/trees • support/infrastructure for agriculture - technical assistance for farming on the eastern shore (compared with western shore; especially soil conservation people) • lack of regulayions • diversity of life on farm - predator, prey, waterfowl, managed ponds

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What they like about the area (favorite places/activities):

<i>March 9th</i>	<i>March 10 afternoon</i>	<i>March 10 evening</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiking/biking in Blackbird State Forest • Hunting in forest (rabbit, deer, geese, dove?, racoon) • Walking "around the block" (quiet roads) • Having neighbors who wave • Running/using hunting dogs (in Blackiston/Kenton areas?) • Meeting other hunters at public hunting areas • Local school activities (Smyrna) convene community • Mix of people/landscape • Enjoying local seafood (Sambo's, Boondocks) • Birdwatching & Stargazing • Trapping • Regional "M.O.T." identify • Horseback riding (forest and farms) • Colors in fall • Driving country roads (Route 9 is a favorite) • Fishing • Being outside/birdwatching • Going for a walk, watching the stars and sunset • Exploring the woods • Riding 4-wheelers • Seeing nature / nature walks • Local school sporting events • Sunday drives to the Eastern Shore • Dog training • Watch jets fly • Boat ride on Blackbird • Work against development • Church dinners • Hiking in BB State Forest, horse riding, biking, hunting, camping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackbird State Forest (oak hill tract, others) • Route 9 • St. Andrews School Road • Union Church Road • Drive from Townsend to Golts, Maryland (Caldwell Corner?) • Smyrna Clayton for shopping and indoor recreation • Area in back of St. Josephs school in Clayton • drive out to Elk Neck State Park • Birds, butterflies, bees, dragonflies (watching) • Corbit Sharp Meadow (behind) • Blackbird Creek (kayaking) • Muskrat & Snapper stew • Fishing off of local roads (Blackbird Landing, Route 9, other) • Proximity to Bombay Hook • paddling on the Blackbird Creek • Out around Golts • Clayton-Delaney Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hunting (esp in delmarva tidal marshes, game reserves, private lands, farm ponds or fields, woods)... for deer, waterfowl (canadian geese) • crabbing on Delaware side (Delaware marshes) • seeing what other farmers are doing on nearby farms (friendly information exchange, stopping by about once per month) • driving the back roads • way to get to stores, houses in Odessa • paddling on streams/ponds • Roads in Chester Watershed, esp. for birdwatching • open water on the Upper Chester • fishing • foxhunting (all over) • farming • close to cities, NASCAR, sporting, cultural events (but can return to peace and quiet!)

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Brainstorm on Stresses: (March 9th afternoon group ONLY)

- Housing
- Traffic
- Dumping (& "litter attitude")
- Proposed SR1 Off Ramps
- Habitat loss from roads, pollution, "trapped" wildlife with no access routes
- So many people fishing/crabbing
- Draining
- Isolated populations (for amphibians, others)
- invasive species
- pollution from septic
- draining wetlands
- lack of understanding/education regarding sensitive areas
- Buildings on/along rivers and wetlands
- Many people depending on systems
- impervious surfacing
- atmospheric deposition
- withdraw of water